Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS)', old age pension has been extended to all 'Below Poverty Line' persons above the age of 65 years. The Government still feels that there is a long way to go and it is the endeavour of the Government to extend the welfare measures to all workers in the unorganized sector.

Checking of unemployment

†2602. SHRI LALIT KISHORE CHATURVEDI: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether in a report released in Geneva, International Labour Organization has predicted that lacs of people will be reduced jobless;

(b) if so, the main concern including the predictions in the report;

(c) whether Government are aware of the news item titled "Is Saal 50 Lakh Ho Jayega Berojgar" as predicated in the media;

(d) if so, the Government's reaction thereto;

(e) whether Government are going to take measure to check unemployment; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) and (b) The Report on Global Employment Trends, January 2008 was released in Geneva by the International Labour Organisation. This Report has predicted that overall employment in the world is expected to increase by around 40 million in 2008 and unemployment could further increase by 5 million. This would lead to a slight increase of the unemployment rate to 6.1 per cent in 2008.

It has also been noted that challenges facing various regions have remained relatively unchanged. Not only is there a rather low impact of growth on job creation, but there is also another concern that the ongoing growth does not have as substantial an impact as necessary to reduce the levels of working poverty, especially in the poor regions of the world. There are still 486.7 million workers in the world who do not earn enough to lift themselves and their families above the US$1 a day poverty line and 1.3 billion workers do not earn enough to lift themselves and their families above the US$2 a day line. To make a long term in road into unemployment and working poverty, it is essential that periods of high growth are better used to generate more decent and productive jobs. Reducing unemployment and working poverty through creation of such jobs should be viewed as a precondition for sustained economic growth.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) to (f) Government is aware of the unemployment problem in the country. The Eleventh Five Year Plan provides a framework to restructure policies to achieve a new vision based on faster, more broad-based and inclusive growth. It aims at making employment generation an integral part of the growth process and devise strategies to accelerate not only growth of employment but also of wages of the poorly paid. Creating new job opportunities would be one of the monitorable socio-economic targets during Eleventh Plan. The Eleventh Plan document approved by National Development Council has projected that 58 million job

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

opportunities on Current Daily Status are likely to be created during the Eleventh Plan period. Besides, Government of India is implementing various employment generation and poverty alleviation programmes in both rural and urban areas to increase employment opportunities. Some of the important ones are—Swarana Jayanti Shahari Rozgar Yojana (SJSRY); Prime Minister's Rozgar Yojana (PMRY); Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY); Rural Employment Generation Programme (REGP); Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana (SGRY) and National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA), 2005.

Steps have been initiated to identify and implement systematic reforms in administration of Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) so as to facilitate closer interaction with the industry in order to improve quality of training, make the graduates better employable and help them earn decent wages.

Effect of low wages to labourers on agricultural production

2603. SHRI AMIR ALAM KHAN: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has conducted any survey to assess the extent of poverty and hunger being suffered by millions of agricultural labourers due to low wages in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise;

(c) the wages paid to the agricultural labourers at present in the country, State-wise;

(d) whether the prevalent practice of low wages in this sector is affecting agricultural production; and

(e) if so, the remedial measures taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) and (b) According to the reply received from the Planning Commission, while no separate survey has been condcuted for agricultural labourers, on the basis of information available for the country as a whole in the quinquennial survey Report of National Sample Survey Organisation 61st Round of "Household Consumer Expenditure among Socio-Economic Groups 2004-05", it has been estimated that 46.1 percentage of persons for agricultural labourer households in rural areas lie below the poverty line. Further, from the Report "Perceived Adequacy of Food Consumption in Indian Households 2004-05" of NSS 61st Round, it is estimated that 5.8 percentages of persons of agricultural labourer households was not getting enough food.

(c) A Statement giving the latest Rates of Minimum Wages to Agricultural labourer (Unskilled) State-wise, is given in the Statement (*See* below).

(d) and (e) The agricultural production depends upon many factors, other than wages, i.e., supply of inputs such as fertilizer, seeds and pesticides/insecticides, mechanization, credit flow, irrigation and rain fall and weather situation etc. There is little scope for increasing area under cultivation. The higher aggregate output levels in agriculture production would be possible on account of achieving higher crop yields per hectare. So the thrust of the Government for increasing agriculture production is through more efficient use of inputs by way of implementation of various crop production programmes being undertaken by the Central and State Governments.